

Vanity Affair

Beauty Pageant Contender Studies at Daemen College on the Side

By Chris Eagan

Danielle Volmy, a sophomore at Daemen College, was recently awarded fourth runner-up placement in the National American Miss teen pageant for New York State. A Political Science major, Danielle and her family relocated from Brooklyn to Lockport for her college pursuits. I sat down with Danielle to talk about the many factors involved in becoming a beauty queen.

ASCENT: There are traditionally many stereotypes associated with beauty pageants. Do you feel that beauty pageants are portrayed favorably in the public eye?

Volmy: I think a lot of people mistake beauty pageants for being all about beauty. If you actually went to a pageant, it's all about personality. Beauty has a part in it, but if you lack personality you won't get far.

ASCENT: Why do you think people have misconceptions?

Volmy: A lot of girls that become beauty queens are beautiful. Some of them act like airheads, but just to joke around. My cousin, for example, won the title three years ago. If you saw her, you wouldn't believe she won that title. If someone would sit at a pageant and ask a judge what they're looking for, the most desired quality is personality. They don't want somebody up there that's pretty but can't communicate or get along with others. They certainly don't want someone with a negative attitude representing the state of New York.

ASCENT: Do you think televised pageants such as Miss America or other pageants as portrayed through the media have a negative impact?

Volmy: No, I don't think so. My mom doesn't think so. Televised pageants like Miss America are looking more for beauty, in my opinion. The judges are looking for personality also, but I think they're looking more for beauty. When

you're younger in competition, you're shown that personality comes first. And from there, if you're beautiful, you can go anywhere. If you look at the contestants in Miss America, they all have nice personalities and wouldn't be up there if they didn't. There are beautiful people with nice personalities, and that's what a lot of people misunderstand.

ASCENT: What do you think can be done to improve the public's perception of beauty pageants?

Volmy: I think what can be done, and what's supposed to be done, is having contestants get involved in community service and student activities. It's explained that you're a queen and represent the state of New York, and should do something to help the community. Helping elderly people at nursing homes, helping kids at schools, basically helping people that need it. And that's what can actually be done. A lot of people say 'she's a beauty queen, what does she do?' But when you're interviewed they may ask you 'what did you do to benefit the state of New York?' People just assume that you're a beauty queen because you're pretty.

ASCENT: I know the National American Miss competition counts Community Service as ten percent of the final score. Do you find that impressive, or could that figure be higher?

Volmy: I've competed since I was five years old. The requirement was more when I was younger, and as I got older it became ten percent. It could be higher, but you'd be surprised how much community service contestants do. For the past three years I did over five hundred hours of community service. You'd think some girls just go to a nursing home and help out for ten or twenty hours. I would assume the minimum every girl in the pageant did was about two hundred hours.

ASCENT: Do you have to compete with the rest of the girls as to who

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did the most community service hours?

Volmy: Actually, you don't. If you do one hour of community service, that still counts as ten percent. The fact that you helped the community is what matters most. Three days before the pageant when we were registering, we helped donate teddy bears and books. We donated teddy bears to those in need and to the Fire Department in New York City for distribution. We donated books to kids that needed them in shelters and other places. I personally donated five teddy bears and about ten books. I was flying, so unfortunately I wasn't able to bring more. But you'd be surprised the number of girls that do Community Service. I don't do Community Service just for the pageant; I do it regardless of the competition. I like helping out the community.

ASCENT: So there are girls that do it just to fulfill the Community Service requirement of the competition?

Volmy: You can tell who likes to do Community Service and who doesn't. Most contestants at the pageant do more than one hour of Community Service. Their desire to help the community depends on who they are.

ASCENT: How did you become involved with the National American Miss Competition?

Volmy: I've been competing ever since I was little. Originally it was the Miss American Coed pageant, and then in recent years I've been in the National American Miss pageant as well. I started when I was five. When I was little I modeled, did gymnastics, tap, ballet, everything. My mom got a postcard in the mail saying if you had beautiful girls to send them over. So my mom registered me and my other sisters, and the first year was very nice. We liked it. I made it to the top twenty but didn't the following year. But we kept coming and I eventually won the Miss Title.

ASCENT: You placed fourth in what branch of the competition this year, states or nationals?

Volmy: States. It's called National American Miss, and you would think it's national, but it's really not. I'm not going to nationals this year because I think it's a waste of money. If you go to nationals you have to pay about \$1500 and aren't guaranteed a title. You're representing fourth runner-up for

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Plagiarism on Campus

By Kathy Horschel

A recent case of plagiarism in one of my classes "got me to thinking" how common plagiarism actually is. For every person that is caught, there surely must be others that are not. But what is plagiarism, exactly? According to the Oxford American Dictionary, plagiarism is "to take and use another person's ideas or writings or inventions as one's own." In a way, it is stealing, and as such it is pretty much a crime.

Many colleges and universities have strict policies on plagiarism. It isn't hard to find the school's policy on Plagiarism; it is right inside the college Catalog, on page twenty-seven or on the web

site. It is a clearly-worded paragraph of what can happen if one chooses to copy material.

The Catalog says "In an instance where then has been a violation of the principles of academic honesty, the instructor may choose to follow one or more of a number of possible alternatives including but not limited to: 1. automatic failure of the work; 2. automatic failure of the entire course; 3. recommending expulsion from the degree program; or 4. recommending expulsion from the College. The student may appeal

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By Chris Eagan

the state of New York, but really the Queen for your state plays the most important role. I'll be competing next year for Miss Royalty, National American Miss once again, and Miss American Coed. The latter two were previously one competition, but National American Miss broke off from Miss American Coed in recent years.

ASCENT: Is fourth the highest you've placed?

Volmy: I actually became Queen when I was seven years old in a Miss American Coed pageant.

ASCENT: If you're in the top five, do you get any specific benefits towards next year's competition?

Volmy: If you're in the top five you get to go to nationals, but I'm not going to nationals. Like I said, you have to pay to go to nationals. The Queen doesn't pay, but the first, second, third and fourth runner-ups have to pay for nationals. I wasn't paying for nationals

because I have school commitments. I received a trophy and banner, no crown because I wasn't the Queen, flowers, and about \$500 to go towards nationals. But \$500 can't cover nationals because the cost is \$1500.

ASCENT: Where was this year's state competition?

Volmy: It was in New York City.

ASCENT: And you had to pay your own airfare and expenses to get there?

Volmy: Yeah, your own airfare, pageant entry fee, food, basically everything by yourself. But when you're a queen, you get more benefits. You get everything that the runner-ups get, plus a free trip to Disney World for two.

ASCENT: Nationals are held in Disney World, right?

Volmy: Yes, Nationals are in Disney World. As Queen you also get a get a crown, modeling scholarship,

free dress, and I think about \$1500.

ASCENT: What do you feel were your strengths and weaknesses as a participant in the National American Miss competition?

Volmy: My strength is I love to smile. If someone can smile really good the judges think you have a nice personality and by the time you reach the interview they'll try and find if there's a nice person behind that smile. I like to talk and can go on forever. You have to get along with others. If you isolate yourself from the girls then people will wonder if you will isolate yourself from others as Queen.

ASCENT: What do you think you can improve on to place higher in future competitions?

Volmy: Maybe my speech. You have to say your speech in front of a large crowd of people. It has to feature details like where you from, where you live now,

from, where you live now, are from, where you live now, and what school you attend. I'd probably include more details. Everything else I did well in. I did well in Walking; I did well in Formal Wear and Evening Gown. So I would have to say my speech.

ASCENT: What advice do you have for those participating in a beauty pageant for the first time?

Volmy: Have fun! To me, it's really not about winning. If you enter you'll understand it's not about winning, it's all about having fun - and you will have fun.

For more information on National American Miss, visit their official website at www.namiss.com

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Plagiarism on Campus

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By Kathy Horschel

the instructor's determination in accordance with the Grade Appeal Procedure." None of these options sound appealing. There have been cases of plagiarism in which students received a warning, for the first time, or had to withdraw from a class. In these cases, the students were lucky.

Most students understand and know what will happen to them if they plagiarize. I would like to inform everyone that there are new software programs and internet sites that a professor can scan your paper into to see where your information came from. That makes detecting plagiarism much simpler then it used to be. My suggestion would be to double or triple-check your citations and quotes before you turn in your paper so you don't get accused or convicted of plagiarism by accident. My stronger suggestion is just NEVER plagiarize in the first place. It's not worth ruining your academic career, not to mention all the money and time put into college sacrificed over just one paper.

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Daemen Student Competes on "Jeopardy"

RESULTS NOT PRETTY

By S.D. Wright

On Monday night, the Daemen College community gathered in front of television sets across campus to see one of their own, sophomore Tyler Magnus, appear on the quiz show, "Jeopardy." Crowds filled the Wick Social Room and other venues, and students even foisted signs of support. A few evening classes were unexpectedly cancelled, as professors expressed interest in seeing Tyler on the famous quiz show.

Unfortunately for Tyler, students and teachers alike were almost universally horrified by his performance. Tyler was eliminated before he could compete in the final round, and in fact held a negative score throughout much of the competition.

Appearing on the show with the standard "Daemen College" sweatshirt, Tyler played against Renee Wilkerson, a junior from Princeton University, and He Ching, a freshman from the University of California at Berkeley. "I could tell those kids were really smart. But I had a good feeling going in," Tyler said.

Apparently, that "good feeling" was in no way justified. As the first round began, Tyler stared in shocked silence as Alex Trebek, the host, asked the questions. "I was, like, what the hell are they talking about! Man, I never learned this stuff in IND class!"

It took Tyler a few minutes to muster up the courage to try and answer at least one question.

"This landmass," Trebek intoned, "has as its capital the city of Canberra, although it was Sydney, the largest city 'down under', that hosted the 2000 Olympics." Tyler buzzed in excitedly, and answered, "What is the United States?" Tyler remembers that this drew stifled laughs from his fellow contestants, and the host himself seemed to suppress a smile.

"I remember that the first round was almost over, and the only answer I had given was completely wrong. But I was, like, I'm gonna kick ass in Double Jeopardy."

Sadly for Tyler, this was not to be the case. As the Double Jeopardy round began, Tyler was confused by the questions. "I totally felt like writing down the words Trebek said and going to some of my professors and asking them what they meant afterwards."

As the round progressed, Tyler confesses that he began to become bored. "I zoned Trebek out, man, and it was all about the pretty femininis in the audience."

He remembers that he then had a moment of shock. "I was gonna lose this thing!" So he decided to pretend to know the answers to the questions anyway.

Tyler began to make irritated sounds whenever one of his

fellow contestants answered a question correctly. At least twice, the camera caught him announcing, "I knew that!" and throwing his hands up in the air in disgust.

Tyler attempted to answer several more questions before the round was finished. Each time the results were less than satisfactory. "According to Tyler," Professor Atkinson, of the History Department, said, "there is no such thing as a 'branch' of government, because, as he said on the show, 'only trees have branches.' I don't even know why I try."

As "Double Jeopardy" ended, Trebek announced that Tyler could not move on to the third round because he had a negative score. "It's all right," he told Trebek, "I'll just study real hard and do it again next week." At this point, Trebek informed Tyler that this would be his one and only appearance on "Jeopardy."

"I still love him!" exclaimed Kasey Ferguson, as Daemen students and staff left the Wick Social Room shaking their heads and ignoring Tyler. "Who cares how smart he is! Besides, he looked really cute on TV. And that Princeton girl really needed some make-up."

Tyler was philosophical after his defeat was televised. "Look, so I'm not Einstein or anything. But at least I tried. Doesn't that count for anything?"

A source has informed the newspaper staff that Tyler had implied to several people at Daemen that he had actually won the contest before his appearance was televised. "Yeah," one cheerleader said, "He kept on coming around all the parties with this big grin on his face, and saying, 'Who wants to kiss the feet of the genius?'"

"All of the professors I know were disappointed by Tyler. Some went back to their offices and locked their doors and started to wail loudly." Professor Atkinson told the Ascent.

At least one Daemen staff member was not affected. Dean Steven Rickson said, "It doesn't matter if Tyler doesn't know that Hemingway was an American and not a French writer. We're interested in shaping his political opinions and getting him to think critically. Which means, think critically about the Spawn of Satan, the Republican party. That's all little Tyler needs to know."

Tyler Magnus couldn't agree more. "So I didn't do well with the questions. Who cares?" He said, pulling his girlfriend Kasey close. "At least I was on Jeopardy, dude."

New "Literature Club" a Complete Failure

By S.D. Wright

Simon Roseman, a senior, woke up one morning this November with a great idea. He decided he would form a new club at Daemen College, called "The Literature Club," intended to be a forum for students to share their opinions about great literary works. Yet Roseman soon realized that he was totally alone in his interest in classic books.

"That kid really needs a girlfriend," opined Sarah Sweed, a junior. "I see him in the library, like, every day, and he's never reading anything that's required."

Roseman, anticipating a big turnout, was disappointed.

Roseman had scheduled the meetings for every Tuesday afternoon. "Yeah, the first few meetings I felt utterly crestfallen because I had prepared this extensive reading list for all of us to share," Roseman said, a copy of Malcolm Lowry's *Under the Volcano* under his arm. "And no one showed up."

"Yeah right," said a Psychology major who did not wish to be identified. "I'm in college to read textbooks, and that other stuff confuses me. Who cares about the human condition? I need a degree, dude."

Apparently, Roseman had

acquired a reputation for "nerdy" behavior before this. Roseman has been known to approach girls on campus for dates with a bow and the greeting, "'Daughter of the Gods, divinely tall and divinely fair.' That's a line from Homer, and it describes you perfectly."

Roseman has yet to seen success with this strategy.

Also, Roseman has taken to wearing t-shirts emblazoned with literary quotes.

"Look, okay, so I'm not the coolest guy around, but all I wanted to do was discuss broad human themes as expressed in

the world's greatest works with my peers."

Roseman admits that he does not have a girlfriend. "No, man, this is not what I'm talking about. Why can't we talk about the conflicts emerging from deconstructionist theory? Or the brutal realism of John Steinbeck?"

Flustered, Roseman ended the interview with the Ascent and walked in the general direction of the library, puffing on a cigarette. "Welcome to Daemen," he mumbled.

The people and situations described on this page are utterly and entirely fictitious.

The Great Foo Fighters Outing

The Ascent's resident expert on contemporary rock music describes an expedition he recently took to see the Foo Fighters in concert

By Adam DeRose

"It's one-hundred and six miles to Chicago; we've got a tank full of gas, half a pack of cigarettes; it's dark, and we're wearing sunglasses...." Those are the famous words from Elwood Blues, of *The Blues Brothers*. That was pretty much what the Kid (my little sister Katie) and I were saying on October 3, 2005. It was around ten-o'clock a.m. when the Kid and I hopped into her jeep to drive to Buffalo to pick up my buddy Tony before we forged onwards to Chicago for a Weezers/Foo Fighters show.

Let me give you a little background information to my story. Sometime this past August, I was surfing the net with the Kid. At that time I was a little bummed out because I had missed the Foo Fighters show in Toronto, because the same day Green Day was playing in Buffalo. Since I had bought the Green Day tickets the moment they went on sale back in the spring, I was kind of bound to that show. So, sadly, I missed the Foos in Canada.

I soon found myself on the Foo Fighters webpage, and noticed that they were still on tour and that there were still tickets on sale for many venues. Besides hanging out with the Kid that night, I was also hanging out with Mr. Jose Cuervo and Mr. John Labatt. It was a good mix. Between the four of us, we decided that it would be wonderful to finally see the Foo Fighters.

The Kid and I love the Foo Fighters and we figured that this would be the closest that we would ever get to seeing my first love, Nirvana! I ended up buying tickets for the show in Chicago.

At first, Chicago does not look that far away from Buffalo on a map. In fact, it's only about two inches, which is no big deal. I was definitely down, the Kid was down, and so was my girl Shannon. It was a done deal to see the Foo Fighters in Chicago.

"That is the stupidest thing you two have ever done!" Or so said the voice of reason coming from my mom. Mom thought it was dumb that we were hiking out to Chicago for a concert. She thought it was the dumbest thing the Kid and I have ever done together; obviously, Mom doesn't know a lot.

Once school started, there was a sad turn of events and Shannon was unable to make the show with Katie and me because of stupid school. I hate how stupid school is in always getting in the way of fun! Apparently, Shannon had anatomy lab practical and a quiz in clin lab.

So the Sunday before the show, the Kid and I were calling eve-

ryone we know to see if they wanted to go to Chicago with us. Between the two of us, we called at least twenty people and we heard the same stupid sob story from everyone. I eventually called my one buddy Tony from work and I asked him if he wanted to go.

The following is a transcript of our conversation, derived completely from memory, of course.

"Hey Tony, it's DeRose!"

"What's up, dude?"

"Nothing. Do you want to go to the Weezers/Foo Fighters show tomorrow?"

"...Um...what time does it start?"

"Seven-thirty, p.m."

"Um...well, I dunno, I have school..."

"[The Kaiser Chiefs] told the crowd... they were from England and I shouted back... 'Go back to England! We want the Foo Fighters!'"

"It's in Chicago!"

"Oh! Um, well, okay!"

We picked Tony up at around ten-thirty a.m. or so. We had our Mapquest directions and we headed out to the Peace Bridge. The customs guard at the station we pulled up to was a scary and tough mofo. He asked us where we were going and why and we told him to Chicago for the Foo Fighters show. I guess the officer did not believe us because he asked us for our tickets. We showed him the tickets and he let us through.

Crossing through Canada to get to the show was much faster. When we were cruising through the country, I soon discovered that the Kid's jeep ran out of numbers on the speedometer. We were going one-hundred plus at three-thousand r.p.m. on that tachometer. The jeep definitely had some balls.

Eventually we made it to Port Huron, Michigan, which is north of Detroit. As we traveled through Michigan, we passed by the outskirts of Detroit, through Lansing, the edge of Kalamazoo, and Battle Creek, which is the home of "Kellogg's"!

Mapquest said that it would take nine hours and change to get to the show. We made it in eight. When we arrived, we found the arena. Since the show started at seven-thirty, and it was six-thirty, I thought we just had an hour until the show started. Then Tony informed me that I was still on Buffalo time and not on Chicago time, and that I hadn't considered the changeover. We ate breakfast and bought a twenty-four pack of Bud Light. We started tailgating in the Target parking lot. Don't worry: Mr. Cuervo came along with me on the trip. He was stored safely in a Gatorade bottle.

Finally the doors opened and we made our way to the gates. I took a couple draughts of Cuervo and then shoved Jose down my pants behind my belt. They scanned our tickets and then we were frisked.

The security guard patted my sides and then lifted up my hoodie and saw my Gatorade bottle. I looked down and said, "How the hell did that get there?!" The guard yanked the bottle out from my pants and threw it away before he let me in.

As I saw my tequila fly from the hands of the security guard to the garbage can, all I could think was "NOOOO! That's real alcohol abuse!"

The Kaiser Chiefs were the openers. They were thanking the crowd and crap like that. They said they were from England and I shouted back from my seat at the opposite end of the building, from the two-hundredth level, "Go back to England! We want the Foo Fighters!" Katie and Tony laughed hysterically and then denied knowing me.

Finally Weezer took the stage. They put on an awesome set and didn't miss a cue. They played all of their great songs with some extra goodies in there too. They played *Beverly Hills*, *We Are All on Drugs*, *Buddy Holly*, *Undone-The Sweater Song*, *Say It Ain't So*, and *Hash Pipe*. Weezer also covered Blur's *Song Two* (the Woo-who! song) and the Foo Fighters' *Big Me*.

The show suffered because of an absence of pyrotechnics. Also, I saw signs that anybody caught crowd surfing would be thrown out. Other than that, it was badass!

And then the house lights were out and the fans started screaming. The Foos took the stage and the first riffs of their song *In Your Honor* rang through.

The Foo Fighters could and should have played for hours. The Kid said they played for about two hours. Considering they have five albums out (one a double-disc), they could have played forever. The Foos played a lot of new stuff from the latest double-disc release *In Your Honor*, but they also included a lot of songs from their previous albums. Such songs they ripped out were *All My Life*, *My Hero*, *Best of You*, *Learn to Fly*, *Up in Arms*, *Times Like These*, *Last Song*, *The One*, *Stacked Actors*, *DOA*, *This is a Call*, *End Over End*, *Breakout*, and *Everlong*. While *Everlong* was playing, I looked over to the Kid and said, "Crap, this is it. This song is known for being their closer."

Fortunately for all of us, the Foos proved me wrong. The Foo Fighters' drummer walked away from his drum kit to play a song off the new album, *Cold Day by the Sun*. The Foos ended up closing the show with one of their best and most kick-ass songs, *Monkeywrench*.

After we left the show, Katie drove back because Tony and I could not - to say the least.

Eventually, we made Katie pull over because we had to piss like racehorses. Katie ended up pulling on the side of the road near a funeral

home. But don't worry, Tony and I did not pee on the funeral home. As Tony and I were going, Tony looked over his shoulder and said, "Holy shit! A cop's coming. Get back in the truck." Once in the jeep, Katie asked what the problem was and we said that there was a cop parked right behind her. Katie asked, of all people, two drunken kids what to do, and Tony told her not to pull away. The cop sat behind us for a good five minutes before he pulled up alongside of us and said, "Everything okay? Good. Okay. Bye." And that was that.

Katie eventually got us lost. We ended up pulling over in a parking lot in a strip plaza at five-thirty a.m. We slept in the jeep until about nine or ten a.m. Then we finally got back on track to get home.

Once we were in Canada again, I made a point of having Katie make a small detour driving by London, Ontario. I had a motive: I wanted to see the Labatts Brewery. The Kid was a little pissed-off. She said, "This is worse than taking an alcoholic to a bar. Now I'm just taking one to the headquarters of the problem." What can I say? I had to see the Brewery! It was like a pilgrimage to me. My trip to the Labatts Brewery is tantamount to a Christian going to Jerusalem or a Muslim going to Mecca. So we saw the Brewery, but we did not take the tour because we did not have the time.

"...I had to see the [Labatts] Brewery. It was like a pilgrimage to me."

We finally arrived back in Buffalo on Tuesday, October 4th. Katie and I looked at the concert shirts we had bought while there, and one showed a list of all the cities the tour was hitting. The Foos were also playing in Detroit and Cleveland. "Man, Adam, you must have been pretty drunk when you bought those tickets!"

I just chuckled and said, "Do you think we can outdo ourselves and hit up the show in Cleveland?"

Do you have a unique concert experience? Write the editor at ascent@daemen.edu.

The Ascent

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